

**TAYLOR ALTERNATIVE LIVESTOCK OPERATION
DECISION DOCUMENT**

September 1, 2000

Application Background and Summary

The Department received the application for the proposed Big Sky Elk Breeding Ranch on May 1, 2000, and accepted the application as completed on May 8th, 2000. The application was prepared by the owners of the property Charles and Phyllis Taylor, Box 131, Moore, MT 59464.

The applicants propose to build an alternative livestock facility for elk approximately 1 1/2 miles north of Moore and approximately 15 miles west of Lewistown, Montana in Fergus County. Their primary purpose for their business is to raise elk for the commercial value of the elk antlers, meat products, breeding stock and other activities such as photography.

The facility would be constructed in two phases: Phase 1 would consist of 24 acres to be completed by an estimated date of August of 2000; Phase 2 would be completed by about April 2003 and add an additional 236 acres to the operation. If the proposed facility is approved, the total alternative livestock operation applied for would consist of up to 250 elk on 260 acres. According to the applicants the 250 elk would consist of 120 cows, 120 calves, and 10 bulls.

The applicants plan to initially stock the operation with elk they own and hold at their nearby facility.

The Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP) under 87-4-408, MCA has primary jurisdiction over the licensing of alternative livestock operations. Section 87-4-409 (3) specifies that Fish, Wildlife and Parks has 120 days to complete an environmental assessment and notify the applicant of its decision to approve or deny the application. The EA is conducted pursuant to the Montana Environmental Policy Act and is intended to identify any potential impacts on the human environment to assist the agency in its decision-making.

The Draft EA was released for public review and comment July 28, 2000. Public comments were accepted through August 15, 2000.

FWP received only one comment specific to the Taylor proposal and EA. It was from the Montana Wildlife Federation and was faxed August 18, 2000. A second letter addressing all of the May, 2000, Region 4, ALO applications was sent by Dyrck Van Hyning of Great Falls, August 10, 2000.

Both comments opposed ALO's in general. Most of the specific remarks in the two memos are addressed in the final EA.

The application process includes an EA prepared by FWP to satisfy the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA). The agency issuing the license is required to assess the impacts to the human environment which includes all factors that interrelate to from the human environment.

The Decision Process

Based on the EA and public comment, a decision must be rendered by the FWP that addresses environmental concerns and follows the applicable laws and regulations pertaining to such licenses. Current Alternative Livestock Operation (ALO) laws require a decision with 120 days following receipt of a completed application.

The FWP understands the potential problems and ramifications that can occur as a result of a faulty ALO operated in an area used extensively by wildlife. As such, we appreciate and share other concerns as listed by the people who chose to respond to the EA. However there are guidelines and rules by which ALOs must operate, and under which the department must consider applications. The Taylor's are obligated to adhere to those rules in the operation of a game farm.

The proposed facility is located in an area with little wildlife use. The Taylor's plan on purchasing the elk for this facility from licensed, disease free alternative livestock operations. The Department of Livestock considers the risk of disease transmission from such sources to be very small if property testing requirements are implemented. ALOs are required to comply with disease testing requirements that are designed to minimize the risk to area livestock and wildlife. Failure to comply with these requirements is grounds for license revocation. Because the property is in an area with little wildlife use the risk of contact with wildlife is expected to be minimal and the risk of potentially adverse disease effects is considered to be minor.

Potential for escapes of elk housed in the operation and ingress of wildlife into the area is considered to be minor. Whitetail deer and Mule deer seem to present the biggest problem for ingress if they were to be attracted to the facility. Notification of any ingress will help FWP assess the adequacy of fencing requirements for this location. This should help to address problems early and may result in modifications to fence design. ALOs that experience escape are required to notify FWP and to get the animals back inside the fence within a reasonable time. Most escaped animals are recovered within a short time though there have been instances where they have not been recaptured.

Decision

The FWP has determined that a license to operate the alternative livestock operation in question will be issued. The issuing of this license is contingent upon approval of fence construction, Department of Livestock approval of quarantine and handling facilities. The Taylor's will have two years from the date of this approval to complete fence construction as submitted in their application. Changes from the application must be approved by FWP.

Licensee must be in compliance with all game farm statutes, rules and regulations of Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks and Department of Livestock. Current regulations are attached for the applicant's information, but it is the licensee's responsibility to keep up with any changes in the laws or regulations.

Mike Aderhold

Mike Aderhold
Regional Supervisor

Sept. 1, 2000

Date

Please sign and return the original to FWP to indicate your concurrence with the license stipulations listed above. A copy of the signed decision will be provided to you for your records.

Mail to: Mike Aderhold, FWP, 4600 Giant Springs Road, Great Falls, MT 59405

Charles Taylor

Date

Phyllis Taylor

Date

FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT BIG SKY ELK BREEDING RANCH ALTERNATIVE LIVESTOCK OPERATION

MONTANA ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (MEPA) PROCESS

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) is required to perform an environmental analysis in accordance with the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) for "each proposal for projects, programs, legislation, and other major actions of state government significantly affecting the quality of the human environment" (Administrative Rules of Montana [ARM] 12.2.430). FWP prepares an environmental assessment (EA) to determine whether a project would have a significant effect on the environment.

The people of Montana, through our legislature, have determined that the alternative livestock industry is appropriate in Montana. It is understood that this carries with it some risk that cannot be reduced to zero. The level of risk that a particular project may introduce must be evaluated by FWP (through the MEPA process) using legislative intent, the negotiated rules and standards therein, as well as established practices that have been demonstrated to be sufficiently effective measures for similar conditions elsewhere.

If, using the above parameters, FWP determines that a project would have a significant impact that cannot be mitigated to a minor impact, the agency will prepare a more detailed environmental impact statement (EIS) before making a decision. If the agency determines that a proposed project will not have a significant impact, or that the impact can be mitigated to minor or none, the agency may make its licensing decision based upon results of the EA and criteria established under Montana alternative livestock statute, Montana Code Annotated (MCA) Title 87, Chapter 4, Part 4.

Mitigation measures may be considered in FWP's analysis as a means to reduce impact(s) of an alternative livestock ranch to a level below significance. FWP may also recommend mitigation measures to reduce impacts that are considered minor. FWP prepared a Draft EA for the proposed Big Sky Elk Breeding Ranch Alternative Livestock Operation, which identified no significant impacts from the Proposed Action that could not be mitigated. The Draft EA was released for public review and comment July 28, 2000. Public comments were accepted through August 15, 2000.

The Draft EA also provided an analysis of impacts to private property by proposed stipulations in the EA as required under 75-1-201, MCA, and the Private Property Assessment Act, Chapter 462, Laws of Montana (1995). The analysis provided in the Draft EA was conducted in accordance with implementation guidance issued by the Montana Legislative Services Division (EQC 1996).

The Draft EA, as modified herein, and this Final EA are hereby approved as the Final EA. This Final EA for the proposed Big Sky Elk Breeding Ranch Alternative Livestock Operation contains summaries of the Proposed Action, affected environment, and potential consequences of the Proposed Action, all of which are described in additional detail in the Draft EA, which is adopted in this Final EA. This document also describes mitigation measures, includes a summary of substantive public comments and agency responses to those comments, and provides the conclusion of the EA. The preferred alternative is the Proposed Action with several recommended mitigation measures.

PROPOSED ACTION

FWP received an initial application dated April 27, 2000 from Charles R. and Phyllis A. Taylor to construct an alternative livestock facility for elk in Fergus County, Montana. FWP received the application on May 1, 2000, and accepted the application as complete in a letter to the Taylors dated May 8, 2000. The proposed Big Sky Elk Breeding Ranch alternative livestock facility would be located approximately 1½ miles north of the town of Moore, and approximately 15 miles west of Lewistown, Montana. The proposed facility is located in Section 32, Township 15 North (T15N), Range 16 East (R16E), and Section 5, T14N, R16E. The Taylors live in the southern part of the proposed enclosure area. The proposed alternative livestock site is located approximately ½-mile southeast of an existing alternative livestock facility (license no. 413) also owned and operated by Charles and Phyllis Taylor. This existing facility is licensed to have up to 600 elk in an enclosure area of 561 acres in Section 30, T15N, R16E.

The proposed alternative livestock facility would be constructed in two phases: Phase 1 would consist of 24 acres to be completed by an estimated date of August 2000; Phase 2 would be completed by about April 2003 (or earlier as needed) and would add an additional 236 acres to the operation. If the proposed facility is approved, the total alternative livestock operation would consist of up to 250 elk on 260 acres. According to the applicants, the 250 elk would consist of 120 cows, 120 calves, and 10 bulls.

Purposes of the proposed alternative livestock facility include: breeding stock, meat and antler production, and other activities such as photography. Elk to be initially released into the proposed facility are owned by the applicants and are held at the nearby alternative livestock facility (license no. 413). Wild animals would be removed by the applicant from the enclosure prior to licensing by FWP.

Fence construction would be completed in accordance with requirements of FWP under ARM 12.6.1531. Elk ranch fencing would consist of 8-foot high, high-tensile, Langley Solidlock 12-gauge wire fencing. Posts would consist of 2½-inch diameter steel drill-stem pipe located every 24 feet of fence run. The fence bottoms would be installed to provide not more than 3 inches of ground clearance. Three exterior gates would be constructed for the Phase 1 enclosure, and two exterior gates would result after completion of the Phase 2 enclosure. Gates would be constructed of 2-inch diameter tubular steel with double-piston latches and heavy chain with padlock. The exterior gate at the driveway entrance would be constructed as an electric double-gate system such that at no time would there be an open connection between the interior and the county road, or as an alternative, the driveway would be fenced on both sides along its entire length.

ALTERNATIVES

One alternative (No Action Alternative) is evaluated in this EA. Under the No Action Alternative, FWP would not issue a license for the operation of the Big Sky Elk Breeding Ranch alternative livestock operation as proposed. Therefore, no alternative livestock would be placed in the proposed fenced enclosure. Implementation of the No Action Alternative would not preclude other activities allowed under local, state, and federal laws to take place at the proposed enclosure site.

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

The proposed Big Sky Elk Breeding Ranch facility is located on leased land about 1½ miles north of Moore, Montana about 15 miles west of Lewistown. The alternative livestock site is located on 260 acres of uplands approximately 1 mile southeast of Ross Fork Creek. This site currently is used to pasture cattle and produce hay. Soil in the proposed enclosure area consists primarily of loam and gravelly loam. Slopes are relatively flat (1 to 5 percent). Soil on sideslopes is moderately susceptible to wind erosion if vegetation is removed (e.g., by grazing or farming).

The proposed alternative livestock site is located in the Judith Basin in central Montana, drained primarily by the Judith River. Ross Fork Creek, a tributary of the Judith River, meanders approximately 1 mile northwest of the proposed alternative livestock site. A tributary channel of Ross Fork Creek extends north-northwest through the center of the proposed enclosure. In the water rights listing for the project area, this channel is referred to as Jones Creek. Flow generally occurs most of the year in this 1-foot wide channel due to springs located upstream of the site. A 3-acre reservoir has been constructed along Jones Creek in the proposed alternative livestock site.

Ross Fork Creek and Jones Creek are not included on the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) list (i.e., Section 303(d) list). Water for alternative livestock in the proposed enclosure area would be obtained from Jones Creek and the small reservoir. Three irrigation water rights are held for surface water in Jones Creek, and several parties have irrigation water rights for Ross Fork Creek downstream of the proposed alternative livestock site. Well records on-file with the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) indicate that two registered water wells are located within 1 mile of the site.

The proposed enclosure area is comprised of dryland alfalfa and grass mixed (181 acres, 69%), irrigated alfalfa and grass mixed (78 acres, 30%), and riparian habitat along the creek (1 acre, 1%). This site currently is used to pasture cattle and crop hay. No federally-listed threatened or endangered plant species were identified within the proposed alternative livestock site. The site does contain some Whitetop, a Category 1 noxious weed.

There is no native vegetation and only a few small Hawthorne woody bushes in the proposed enclosure area. Average forage production in these upland sites is estimated at 3,000 to 4,000 pounds per acre (under normal moisture conditions) or approximately 750,000 to 1,000,000 pounds (375 to 500 tons) total per year for the 260-acre enclosure area.

The proposed alternative livestock site and surrounding land is white-tailed and mule deer habitat. The Ross Fork Creek bottomland and adjacent brushy slopes are the primary areas used by resident white-tailed deer during summer. There is no density estimate for deer in this area during summer. During winter, migratory deer move into this area from foot-slopes of the Big Snowy and Little Belt Mountains, utilizing both the bottomland and upland habitat. Ross Fork Creek is a corridor for deer movement during both summer and winter and it is an obvious travel route between the Judith River to the Snowy Mountains.

Ross Fork Creek probably is a corridor for movement of elk between the Moccasin Mountains, Big Snowy Mountains, lower Judith River, and the Missouri River Breaks. Although there are no resident elk in this area, they occasionally pass through the general area. The closest known resident elk population is in the Big Snowy Mountains about 10 to 12 miles away. Pronghorn are largely absent from the area north of Highway 200, but are present south of the highway. Mountain lions are common in the adjacent mountain ranges and occasionally move through the area when deer are abundant during the winter. There are no documented records of recent wolf activity in this area. This area could potentially be used by migratory bald eagles and whooping cranes (federally-listed bird species).

Most land immediately surrounding the proposed alternative livestock site is cropland and livestock (cattle) pasture. The Judith River receives some public fishing use; however, the only public land within 3 miles of the alternative livestock site is a state-owned section located approximately 1½ miles to the west of the project site. Public land in the general area typically is leased by local ranchers for agricultural use and is occasionally used by local residents for recreational purposes (mostly hunting and fishing). Several county roads are located within 3 miles of the proposed enclosure. The nearest permanent residences located outside of the enclosure are approximately ¼-mile southwest and ½-mile east of the site.

There is a potential for elk to carry or become infected with contagious diseases or parasites that are transmissible to other animals. Domestic livestock are currently pastured in the vicinity of the proposed facility. In order for disease transmission to occur, the organism causing the disease needs to be present. Any alternative livestock introduced to this proposed facility would be tested disease-free for tuberculosis and brucellosis, and would be in compliance with DoL regulations (monitoring for chronic wasting disease, etc.) prior to movement to the facility.

CONSEQUENCES OF THE PROPOSED ACTION

Only primary resources with the potential to be adversely impacted by the Proposed Action are summarized in this section. A more detailed review of environmental consequences is contained in *Part II* of the Draft EA.

Impacts to Land, Water, and Vegetation Resources

The proposed 260 acre alternative livestock operation would have minor impacts to land and soil resources. Soil on the low-gradient slopes has a moderate hazard of wind and water erosion. If vegetation is removed by overuse (due to overgrazing or trampling), soil erosion could occur and sediment could enter the tributary drainage that extends through the proposed enclosure, and be transported downstream to Ross Fork Creek. The proposal to pasture up to 250 elk on the 260-acre site with supplemental feed available would reduce vegetative cover to some extent. Areas of the proposed enclosure that would be most susceptible to erosion problems are on the steeper slopes along the stream channel. The extent to which erosion would occur is dependent primarily on elk density. The exterior fence of the facility would cross Jones Creek in two locations. The fence design at these locations would be approved by FWP as game-proof.

Domestic elk fecal matter and nutrient-enriched water may have an effect on the quality of groundwater and surface water in the vicinity of the elk ranch (dependent upon elk density and waste management practices), primarily during periods of snow-melt and major precipitation events. Nutrients in runoff from the site would enter Jones Creek and Ross Fork Creek. These nutrients from the elk ranch would become diluted downstream and would have a minor effect on water quality, particularly in relation to cattle-related effects that already exist in this drainage. Within the enclosure, however, the elk probably would be concentrated in greater density compared with cattle grazing, for a majority of each year.

The Proposed Action would place up to 250 elk (120 cows, 120 calves, and 10 bulls) on 260 acres for a year-long basis. The proposed alternative livestock site could supply all of the forage needs of the elk when fully stocked; however, the applicant has proposed to include supplemental feed. The maximum stocking rate of about 1 elk per acre is considered high for nonirrigated land and could contribute to the long-term decline of vegetation resources, both in terms of plant species composition and productivity of the site. Areas where elk are fed or handled may experience the greatest vegetation impacts.

There are no plans to alter native plant communities on the proposed elk ranch. No known threatened or endangered plant species were observed in the proposed enclosure area. Development of the proposed facility would result in the shift of agricultural use of about 259 acres of hayland to be used for the alternative livestock. Noxious weeds were apparent at this site and, under an intensive elk grazing regime, these weeds would increase in abundance. Weeds would likely spread quickly to disturbed areas around any site that elk are fed or handled. Weed seeds could potentially be imported into the area with elk feed. Overall impacts from weeds would be minor given the proposed maximum stocking rate.

Impacts to Wildlife Resources

The exclusion of wildlife from 260 acres would displace a few resident deer from habitat near Ross Fork Creek. The proposed enclosure, together with the existing alternative livestock facility, would cumulatively exclude an estimated 15 deer from approximately 821 acres (includes 561 acres of existing elk ranch). Since

the proposed enclosure would be at least 1 mile from Ross Fork Creek, it would not form a barrier to deer moving along the creek bottomlands. The proposed fence enclosure would cross low-gradient slopes (1.5 to 2 percent or about 1 degree) on either side of the tributary drainage channel.

Ross Fork Creek in the vicinity of the alternative livestock facility is a transitional stretch from a rainbow trout/brook trout fisheries to a warm-water fisheries. The maximum level of elk grazing in the proposed enclosure would have a minor effect on fisheries through increased sedimentation and fecal matter washed into Ross Fork Creek during runoff events. Although non-game, warm-water fish species are relatively tolerant of this form of habitat alteration and water quality effects, there could be a minor degradation of habitat quality in the stream.

The general area is used by pheasants and ducks, and possibly gray partridge and sharp-tailed grouse. Most of these waterfowl and birds, however, frequent the bottomlands along Ross Fork Creek rather than the upland areas where the proposed alternative livestock facility would be located. The potential loss of vegetative cover due to intensive grazing by elk on 260 acres would reduce some nesting success for birds in this area to a minor degree. Although mountain lions could potentially pass through this area and may be attracted to the alternative livestock, the likelihood of a lion entering the enclosure is reduced because the site is located several miles from the closest mountain range.

Impacts to Land Use, Recreation, and Community

The proposed alternative livestock facility would be compatible with existing agricultural land uses. The elk ranch would result in an agricultural use change of about 260 acres of cropland/hayland to be used for pasturing elk. With respect to land use, no significant conflicts should result between operation of the alternative livestock facility and the agricultural or residential uses in the area. Additional homes could be constructed in the vicinity of the enclosure on private land. Potential effects of the alternative livestock operation on adjacent property values is difficult to evaluate because some nearby property owners may like the idea of alternative livestock, whereas others would find it undesirable. No impacts to the local infrastructure would occur under the Proposed Action.

Risk/Health Hazards

There is a potential for transmission of water-borne disease pathogens, if present, to be transported downstream from the proposed facility and into Ross Fork Creek. This is expected to be a minor risk because of alternative livestock disease testing requirements and lack of stagnant water in the drainage. The route of chronic wasting disease (CWD) transmission at this time is unknown; therefore, the potential for transmission by soil, water, or other media cannot be determined.

Risk of disease (e.g., brucellosis and tuberculosis) being passed from alternative livestock (elk) to wildlife and domestic livestock would be minimal if fence integrity is maintained and the mitigation measures described in this EA are followed. Potential for disease transmission from alternative livestock is also mitigated through DoL disease testing requirements. Each alternative livestock operation is required to have access to an isolation pen (quarantine facility) on the facility or an approved quarantine plan to isolate any animals that are imported or become ill. Snow drift-prone areas and stream crossings along the perimeter fence of the proposed enclosure have the potential to affect fence integrity. These issues are discussed in detail in the "Wildlife" and "Water Resources" sections of the Draft EA.

Cumulative Effects

The Proposed Action would add to impacts from the existing alternative livestock facility (license no. 413) located approximately ½-mile northwest of the proposed facility. The existing operation is licensed for up to 600 elk on 561 acres. This facility, in combination with the proposed alternative livestock operation, could

result in up to 850 elk on 821 acres in close proximity to Ross Fork Creek. The Proposed Action would result in potential impacts that are individually minor, and not cumulatively significant. Due to the sparsely populated area in the vicinity of the proposed alternative livestock facility, no significant cumulative impacts to local residents, wildlife, or habitat are expected.

REQUIRED STIPULATIONS

None.

RECOMMENDED MITIGATION MEASURES

The following recommended mitigation measures address minor impacts identified in the Big Sky Elk Breeding Ranch EA for resources that have the potential to be affected by the Proposed Action:

- Maintain a reasonable stocking rate within the enclosure to minimize changes in soil structure and potential increases in runoff and erosion to Jones Creek from disturbed ground. Potential overuse also could be avoided by cross-fencing or other means to direct use for water access and to allow for flexibility in the control of grazing use.
- Employ one or more of the following BMPs to reduce odor problems if they occur: (1) incorporate waste into soil quickly by plowing or disking; (2) spread waste during cool weather or in the morning during warm, dry weather; (3) properly dispose of animal carcasses away from water bodies, roads, and ditches according to county solid waste regulations; and (4) reduce stocking rate of alternative livestock.
- For any areas that may have erosion and sedimentation problems, utilize best management practices (BMPs) where surface water could enter Jones Creek. The BMPs may include earth berms, straw bale dikes, vegetative buffer zones, and/or silt fences to be used on a seasonal basis.
- Monitor the ranch site for invasion of noxious weeds and treat affected areas in a timely manner. Should noxious weeds continue to be detected, a weed control program that complies with the Fergus County Weed Management Plan should be implemented, if not already in place, to control the weeds.
- Create additional interior pastures such that rotational grazing strategies can be implemented to reduce adverse impacts to vegetation.
- Store feed away from exterior fences or enclose in containers or buildings. Feed elk at interior portions of the enclosure and not along the perimeter fence.
- Inspect the fence on a regular basis and immediately after or during events that have a greater probability of damaging the fence (e.g., high streamflow, strong wind storms). Clear debris promptly that may collect at the fenced stream crossings to reduce the potential for flooding and fence damage.
- Adjust fence requirements to include double fencing, internal fencing, electrification, or increased height if fence integrity or ingress/egress becomes a problem.
- Minimize risk of disease epidemic or heavy parasite infections among alternative livestock by maintaining a reasonable elk stocking rate in relation to the enclosure size, periodic removal of manure from concentration areas, and development of a disease immunization and parasite treatment protocol as applicable to domestic elk.

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS AND FWP RESPONSES

Public comments for the Big Sky Elk Breeding Ranch alternative livestock operation draft environmental assessment (EA) were accepted from July 28 through August 15, 2000. No public comments were received by FWP during the comment period.

CONCLUSION OF THE EA

The Draft EA, as modified herein, and this Final EA are approved as the Final EA for the Big Sky Elk Breeding Ranch alternative livestock operation. The preferred alternative is the Proposed Action, with recommended mitigation measures listed in this Final EA. Based on this review, it is determined that the Proposed Action with the recommended mitigation measures would not have a significant impact on the environment and that an EIS will not be required.

ANALYSIS OF IMPACT ON PRIVATE PROPERTY

Montana alternative livestock statutes (87-4-476, MCA) require that licenses may be denied or issued with stipulations to prevent unacceptable threat of escape of alternative livestock, and to prevent a significant threat to the safety of the general public and surrounding landowners by the shooting of alternative livestock animals. MEPA requires FWP to identify and analyze environmental impacts of the Proposed Action and potential mitigation measures. MEPA, as revised by Senate Bill 231 of 1995, also requires agencies to evaluate the impact on private property of regulatory actions, such as denial of a permit or establishment of permit conditions (75-1-201, MCA). The Environmental Quality Council (EQC) has established procedural guidelines to implement these requirements. The analysis provided in the Draft EA was prepared in accordance with implementation guidance issued by the EQC.

In addition, the Private Property Assessment Act (2-10-101, MCA, et seq.) requires agencies to determine whether proposed actions by the State of Montana have "taking or damaging implications", such as to constitute a deprivation of private property in violation of the United States or Montana constitutions and, if so, to perform an impact assessment to determine the likelihood that a state or federal court would hold that the action is a taking or damaging, to review alternatives, and to determine the estimated cost of compensation. In accordance with the Act, the attorney general has prepared guidelines, including a checklist, to assist agencies in identifying and evaluating actions with taking or damaging implications.

The Draft EA contains FWP's completed checklist with respect to the stipulations, if any, recommended in the preferred alternative and has found that the preferred alternative does not have taking or damaging implications and that an impact assessment is not required.

PERSONS RESPONSIBLE FOR PREPARING THE EA

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

Bob Barber, FWP Game Warden
Fish, Wildlife & Parks, Region 4
310-7th Ave. West
Lewistown, MT 59457

Tom Stivers, FWP Wildlife Biologist
Fish, Wildlife & Parks, Region 4
126-14th Avenue South
Lewistown, MT 59457

Terry Hill, FWP Warden Captain
Fish, Wildlife & Parks, Region 4
PO Box 6610
Great Falls, MT 59405

Tim Feldner, Manager of Commercial Wildlife Permitting Program
Enforcement Division
1420 E. 6th Avenue
Helena, MT 59620

Montana Dept. of Livestock

Evaleen Starkel, Alternative Livestock Program Specialist
Animal Health Division
Third Floor, Scott Hart Building
301 Roberts
Helena, MT 59620

Maxim Technologies, Inc.

Daphne Digrindakis, Project Manager
Doug Rogness, Water Resources, EA Preparation
Pat Mullen, Wildlife, Vegetation, EA Preparation
P.O. Box 4699
Helena, MT 59604